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in our day, will be conducted in any more suitable place than Washington. But we cannot think it fanciful to estimate highly the influence of humanizing social influences on the minds of those to whom is trusted the vast responsibility of that administration. At any rate, whatever causes may have more or less agency in producing the angry and provoking style of debate, so deplorably common in the national legislature, it is impossible that any considerate patriot should regard the existence of that practice without concern. It is not merely, that discourtesy, coarseness, violence in our high places affects the national character, but that, — unless one will choose to say, that men furiously incensed against each other are as capable of sober, cool, and wise joint action, are as likely to conspire for the common good, as if they were in a placid humor, — it cannot fail materially to affect the course of legislation. In the session of Congress which has begun before these pages will see the light, recent causes of exasperation will have lost something of their force. We cannot but hope to see it conducting the business of the country in a manner more suitable to the dignity of the agents than heretofore, and proportionably, as we view the matter, more auspicious to the public welfare.

- ART. VII. — 1. *Second Annual Report of the Board of Education, together with the Second Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board.* Boston: Dutton & Wentworth. 8vo. pp. 79.
2. *Third Annual Report of the Board of Education, together with the Third Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board.* Boston: Dutton & Wentworth. 8vo. pp. 102.
3. *Abstract of the Massachusetts School Returns for 1838–9.* Boston: Dutton & Wentworth. 8vo. pp. 341.
4. *Abstract of the Massachusetts School Returns for 1839–40.* Boston: Dutton & Wentworth. 8vo. pp. 482.
5. *Lecture on Education.* By HORACE MANN, Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education. Boston: Marsh, Capen, Lyon, & Webb. 12mo. pp. 62.

THE recent movements in Massachusetts in regard to education are of such importance, and of so general interest,

not only to the inhabitants of that State, but to all who are making or meditating similar movements elsewhere, that, though we have recently gone somewhat fully into the subject,* we shall venture again to invite to it the attention of our readers.

The Board of Education of Massachusetts was created by an act of the State legislature, passed April 20th, 1837. That measure had its origin, undoubtedly, in the conviction that the common schools, so far from keeping pace with the advance of general intelligence, were in a low state, and yearly growing worse, rather than better.

The common schools of Massachusetts had deservedly been the pride and boast of its citizens. The first acts of the Pilgrims recognised the paramount importance of education. By the act of 1647, every town of fifty families was bound to maintain a school in which the children should be taught to read and write; and every town of one hundred families was obliged to maintain a grammar school, the master whereof should be able to qualify youth for the University.

The spirit of these laws is purely republican. They protect the children and apprentices in their right to be instructed, against the indifference or cupidity of masters and parents, but leave it to the majority of the inhabitants of each town to provide the means in their own way. Further, what was quite as essential to the accomplishment of the design of the law, they provide a standard below which the qualifications of a teacher in the grammar schools shall not fall; he shall "be able to instruct youth so far as they shall be fitted for the University"; thus bringing within the reach of all the children of every town of one hundred families, the means of preparing themselves for the highest course of instruction then or now existing in the country. Had this law continued in operation, youth from nearly every town in the Commonwealth would now be enjoying this privilege.

The whole policy of the Puritan colonists in this matter fills us with admiration. In their simplicity they conceived, and in their poverty executed, a scheme, which had proved too high for the intellect, and too vast for the power, of every previous potentate or people; the hitherto unimagined idea of

* See *North American Review*, Vol. XLVII. pp. 273 et seq.

universal education. Fugitives from the persecution of the old world, and hemmed in between the waves of a stormy sea and the savages of a boundless wilderness, so little were they subdued by the hardness of their lot, that they regarded ignorance and vice as the only evils, and religious instruction and intellectual discipline as the effectual remedies. Where shall their descendants look for a higher example ?

The act of 1789, up to which time these laws continued in operation, was a wide departure from the principle of the original law ; it substitutes six months for the constant instruction provided for towns of fifty families, and requires a grammar teacher of determinate qualifications for towns of two hundred families, instead of the similar requisition from all towns of half that number of inhabitants. Still, however, far as it falls short of that noble democratic idea of the Pilgrims, of providing the best instruction possible for all, it would, if in force at the present day, render instruction of the highest kind accessible to the children of more than two thirds of the towns of the Commonwealth.

By an act of February, 1824, — facetiously called, in the Index to the Massachusetts Laws, “an act *providing for* the public schools,” — the law of 1789 was repealed ; and for all towns of less than five thousand inhabitants, instead of a master of “good morals, well instructed in the Latin, Greek, and English languages,” a teacher or teachers must be provided, “well qualified to instruct youth in orthography, reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, and geography, and good behaviour.”

This act was the severest blow the common-school system ever received ; not only because it shut from the poor children of all but a few towns the path which had always lain open to the highest order of education, but because it took away a fixed standard for the qualifications of teachers, and substituted no other in its stead. The common schools had hitherto been as nursing mothers to the gifted children of the indigent, who were often raised through them to better opportunities, and thence to the highest stations in society. This high duty they utterly abandoned. The poor boy of talent, who, under the former system, would have received the elements of the best education, gratuitously, but of right, in his native town, was thenceforward obliged to find or beg his way to a private school or academy, or to remain for ever without a learned

education. The candidate for the office of teacher, being released from the necessity of an acquaintance with the learned languages, which in most cases implied a certain degree of cultivation and refinement, and amenable to no rule measuring the amount of the mere elements, which only were required, was too often found to be lamentably deficient even in them.

The effects of lowering the standard of instruction in the public schools became, to attentive observers, every year more apparent. For a time the better qualified teachers continued in the service ; but they were gradually supplanted, in many places, by persons who from their inferior qualifications were willing to do the work for a lower compensation.

In 1830, the American Institute of Instruction was formed, and had its first annual meeting in Boston. At this were present teachers and other persons interested in the cause of popular education, to the number of several hundreds, from every part of New England, and from several of the Middle, Southern, and Western States. The Institute has continued to hold its meetings, usually for the space of five days, annually, up to the present time. Those who have attended the meetings, and become acquainted with the members, have become, of course, more or less familiar with the condition of the schools in various parts of the country, and particularly in Massachusetts, within which State, until the last year, the meetings have always been held.

In January, 1836, after frequent deliberation upon the subject, the Directors of the Institute addressed a memorial to the legislature, praying for the appointment of a Superintendent of Common Schools. The memorial was favorably received, and a most respectable committee reported in favor of its object ; but no action immediately followed. In January, 1837, a memorial was presented by the same body, praying that provision might be made for the better training of the teachers of the schools in the Commonwealth, and briefly stating their views as to the necessity of such provision. The act of the next April created the Board of Education, and designated its duties.

The common schools were probably, at this time, at their lowest point of degradation. From what we can learn, they had, in most parts of the Commonwealth, been gradually declining, until, by this act, the Legislature showed its disposition to interpose, and arrest their downward progress.

It will not be without advantage to trace some of the several steps that have been taken by the legislature, and to inquire what has been done by their organ, the Board of Education, with a view to satisfy ourselves as to what benefits have followed, or are likely to follow, to the Common Schools.

The Board of Education, at its first meeting, held June 29th, 1837, appointed as their Secretary, Mr. Horace Mann, at that time President of the Senate of Massachusetts. Mr. Mann had been known to the individuals of the Board as a member of one or the other branch of the General Court for the ten previous years, and especially as the principal mover and agent in the erection of the State Lunatic Hospital, — a work of a kind second to no other in benevolence, and employing and requiring powers as much nobler than those of mere intellect, as these are superior to the physical powers, which are the objects of mere savage admiration.

He had, moreover, been recently engaged in the revision of the Laws of the Commonwealth, and had been charged, together with another, with the supervision of the Revised Code; and was therefore as familiar, probably, as any other individual, with the laws, institutions, and interests of the State. Immediately on his appointment, he gave up a lucrative practice in his profession, and, abandoning all other pursuits, devoted all his energies, time, and thoughts, to the work he had entered upon.

The duty of preparing an Abstract of the School Returns was assigned to the Secretary, and the volumes containing the Returns for the last three years have, with no small labor, been prepared by him.

On the 1st of February, 1838, the Board made their first Annual Report, accompanied by the first Annual Report of the Secretary. At the suggestion of the Board, and in answer to an Address to the People of the Commonwealth, adopted by them at their first meeting, conventions of the friends of education had been held, between August and November, in every county in the State except Suffolk. All these conventions the Secretary met and addressed. They were attended by persons of the highest character for intelligence and moral worth, from nearly every town in their respective counties.

Mr. Mann's address on these occasions has recently been published, under the title of a "Lecture on Education."

We have no doubt that most of those who have read it or who heard it, must have regarded it as one of the best upon the subject that was ever given. It is simple, direct, and intelligible, and by its overflowing abundance of apt illustrations, admirably well suited to the miscellaneous audiences to whom it was addressed.

Preparation had been made for the effective action of the convention, by a series of questions drawn up by the Secretary, and widely circulated throughout the Commonwealth, relating to the constitution and action of the school committees, the qualifications and mode of employment of teachers, the interest exhibited by parents, the uniformity and mode of providing school books, the use of apparatus, the character of the school houses, and the length of time the schools were kept. The subjects suggested by these questions, and others affecting the schools, were discussed, and the statements thus publicly made are regarded by the Secretary as to be entirely relied upon. Written answers were also received from the school committees of nearly half the towns in the State ; and thus was begun the process of collecting and disseminating information upon the condition of the schools.

The four subjects which principally occupy the Secretary's First Report, are 1. The situation, construction, condition, and number of school houses ; 2. The manner in which the school committees discharge their duties ; 3. The interest felt by the community in the education of *all* its children ; 4. The competency of teachers.

With the exception of the first, Mr. Mann goes fully into an examination of each of these topics. He begins by showing, with great force and earnestness, the extreme importance of the duties of the school committee-men, in the selection and examination of teachers ; in the selection and enforcing a uniformity of school books ; the regulation and discipline and regular visitation of the schools ; and the duty of requiring regular attendance. In regard to two of these points, we quote a few of his statements and remarks.

“ A portion of the children, dependent wholly upon the common schools, absent themselves from the winter school either permanently or occasionally, equal to a permanent absence of about one third of their whole number ; and a portion absent themselves from the summer schools, either permanently or oc-

casionally, equal to a permanent absence of considerably more than two fifths of their whole number." — pp. 37, 38.

"This State employs, annually, in the common schools, more than three thousand teachers, at an expense of more than *four hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars*, raised by direct taxation. But they have not one-thousandth part of the supervision which watches the same number of persons, having the care of cattle, or spindles, or of the retail of shop goods. Who would retain his reputation, not for prudence, but for sanity, if he employed men on his farm, or in his factory, or clerks in his counting-room, month after month, without oversight and even without inquiry? In regard to what other service are we so indifferent, where the remuneration swells to such an aggregate?

"Being deeply impressed with these views, I inserted in the circular an interrogatory upon this subject; and, wherever I have been, I have made constant inquiries whether this duty of visitation were performed, agreeably to law. I have heard from nearly all the towns in the state. The result is, that not in more than fifty or sixty towns, out of the three hundred and five, has there been any pretence of a compliance with the law; and in regard to some of these towns, after a reference to the requisitions of the statute, the allegation of a compliance has been withdrawn, as having been made in ignorance of the extent of its provisions." — pp. 40, 41.

Such was the state of the schools, in these particulars, as far as could be learnt by the Secretary, in 1837.

This melancholy condition of things is justly referred, not to any particular faithlessness on the part of the committees, but to the indifference of the community, and to the manifestly unjust expectation, that men should perform a severe and unwelcome duty entirely without remuneration. As a remedy, he suggests to the Board the expediency of recommending to the General Court the providing some compensation to school-committees for duties so laborious, and yet so necessary.

The next topic discussed in this Report is the apathy of the people themselves towards the common schools. It is shown that this apathy is exhibited by two widely diverse portions of the community, those who from ignorance, or culpable remissness, fail in their duties towards their own children, and those, who, feeling the paternal interest in its natural strength, but seeing the low condition of the public schools, will not, or dare not, run the risk of the contamination or neglect

their children might suffer there, and provide for them what they consider better and safer places of instruction in private schools or academies. With searching and cogent argument the Secretary points out the mighty importance to all classes in the community, to the rich as well as to the poor, to the refined and intelligent as well as to the ignorant and debased, of sustaining and elevating the common schools. He appeals to the spirit of patriotism and the humane sympathies of the most intelligent, to rescue from degradation institutions which must be the only moral safety of the great majority of the people.

Addressing those who object to sending their children to the public schools, from fear of the profanity and vulgar and mischievous habits that may prevail there, he says ;

“ Would such objectors bestow that guardian care, that parental watchfulness, upon the common schools, which an institution so wide and deep-reaching in its influences, demands of all intelligent men, might not these repellent causes be mainly abolished ? Reforms ought to be originated and carried forward by the intelligent portion of society ; by those who can see most links in the chain of causes and effects ; and that intelligence is false to its high trusts, which stands aloof from the labor of enlightening the ignorant and ameliorating the condition of the unfortunate. And what a vision must rise before the minds of all men, endued with the least glimmer of foresight, in the reflection, that, after a few swift years, those children, whose welfare they now discard, and whose associations they deprecate, will constitute more than *five sixths* of the whole body of that community, of which their own children will be only a feeble minority, vulnerable at every point, and utterly incapable of finding a hiding-place for any earthly treasure, where the witness, the juror, and the voter cannot reach and annihilate it ! ” — pp. 54, 55.

He shows how much better it would be, for, all, that all should be educated together, up to the point for which it is advisable that public provision for education should be made ; and that, beyond that, there would still be ample field for the exercise of private munificence, in providing higher seminaries, — academies and universities, — for those whose paths should lie through their halls.

Another subject discussed in this Report, is the competency of teachers ; and in handling it the Secretary gives, in a few words, an intimation of what the art of teaching is, and

what the teachers should be ; states facts, showing the deplorable want of well-qualified teachers, especially in reference to moral instruction ; and refers to the miserably meagre compensation they receive. While on this topic, he adverts to the importance of having children instructed in their social and civil duties, and to the alarming fact, that intellectual instruction is now the only part of the work of education that is attempted in most of the schools. Some suggestions in reference to school apparatus, county associations for the improvement of the schools, town associations, improvement in the school registers, and a change in the time of choosing the committees, close the Report.

The brief First Report of the Board itself to the Legislature treats, among other subjects, of school houses, recommending greater attention to their construction ; of committees ; of the education of teachers ; of district school libraries, in regard to which no specific course is recommended ; of a journal for the promotion of education in the common schools ; and of the evils of the multiplicity of school books.

In March following, appeared the Secretary's valuable Report on school houses. By personal observation, or by correspondence, he had ascertained the size, construction, and condition, more or less exactly, of eighteen hundred school houses, in every part of the Commonwealth. He was therefore, in this respect, somewhat fully prepared for his work. He moreover availed himself of the abundant materials on the subject contained in the volumes of Lectures of the American Institute. On the subjects of ventilation and warming, size, desks, seats, and other furniture, site of school houses, light, windows, yards or play-grounds, and the duty of teachers in relation to school houses, he goes minutely into most of the circumstances, essential to a pleasant, healthful, convenient, and economical house, detailing, in a popular manner, those philosophical and chemical principles that are important to be known, and enforcing his own opinions by letters from some of the most eminent and experienced men in the country.

In the structure of school houses, too much attention cannot be given to ventilation, a matter in its principles simple enough, yet almost universally misunderstood, and practically neglected. The important points in the construction of a ventilator are, that it should, when it is possible, be a warm

tube, and that it should open near the floor of the apartment to be ventilated. When always warm, which it is when it runs up by the side of a smoke-flue in operation, it constantly acts, from the mechanical tendency of a column of heated air to rise ; whereas, if cold, it acts only when air is, by some other means, forced into the room to be ventilated, as is the case when the room is warmed by air introduced from abroad. In every other case, a cold ventilator is not to be relied on. The second essential point is, that its opening should be near the floor of the apartment ; for it then carries off the stratum of air in contact with the floor, which is always the coldest and usually the foulest in the room. An attention to these principles would add much to the comfort and healthfulness, not only of school rooms, but of lecture rooms, churches, and halls of legislation, all of which are usually ill ventilated.

Most of the rooms used for schools were originally constructed with an open fire-place. This is one of the best ventilators that can be contrived. It occupies the best possible position for a ventilator. Opening on a level with the floor, it takes off more of the poisoned air, and much less heated air, than it would in any other situation, since the heated air naturally rises to the upper parts of the room, while the foul air first sinks, and then gradually diffuses itself equally through the whole air with which it is in communication. The fire-place, unfortunately, is commonly stopped up, and its place supplied by a close stove. If, however, the fire-place be so contrived as to be open or shut at pleasure, and the stove-pipe, as is usually the case, be made to enter the flue somewhere above, the only condition necessary to bring this ventilator into action, is secured. The upper part of the flue will be warmed, and the air will draw regularly and steadily upwards through the open fire-place below. The only thing else necessary to carry on the process of ventilation with security against smoke, and with economy of heat, is to have a stream of the external air brought into the room directly beneath, or, better still, directly through the stove.

The best possible material for a furnace or stove, especially if it must be within the room, is the soap-stone, of which we have such abundant quarries in various parts of New England.

This report contains some striking remarks on the impor-

tance of that too often chance-determined matter, the position of school houses. When their place can be chosen, they should be built on a gentle declivity, looking towards the south-west, whence come the pleasantest winds of summer, and protected on the north and east by a hill covered with wood. Trees should be on either side, at some little distance, and an ample green space in front, for play, with here and there an oak, an elm, or a beech. If, at such a distance from the play-ground as not to be injured or interfered with, there could be also a shrubbery and a plot for flowers, it would be a delightful appendage. It is to be hoped that those who are selecting sites for schools will be influenced by such considerations ; and let them remember, that they are acting for the happiness of future generations. If there is one site in a town better than any other for the school, it ought by all means to be secured by the public, or by private generosity ; and what could be a more fitting field for the exercise of a munificent public spirit, than furnishing these pleasant places for the sports and lessons of the young ?

In this Report appears the first suggestion of what has since been called the *Union School System*. Of this we are to say something by and by.

In April, of the year 1838, additional acts concerning the schools were passed by the legislature ; the most important of which are those providing for annual reports of school committees, for their remuneration, and for the union of school districts. In December of that year, the Secretary submitted his Second Annual Report, which, with the Second Annual Report of the Board of Education, was laid before the Senate in January, 1839.

The Report of the Board is principally occupied with the subject of the education of teachers, and the plan for the establishment of Normal Schools. The regulations adopted for their management require, that candidates for admission shall be sixteen years old, if females, and seventeen, if males, and shall pursue a course of study to occupy three years, or, in case individuals should not be able to remain so long, a shorter one for a single year. The two objects of the course are, first, a thorough and systematic acquaintance with the branches required by statute to be taught in the public schools, together with the principles of Christian ethics and piety common to

all Christians ; and secondly, the arts of instruction and government, to be illustrated by the management of a Model School.

An act of the legislature, passed in April, 1837, had authorized each of the school districts to expend thirty dollars for the first, and ten for each succeeding year, in providing a District Library. For the purpose of aiding the districts in the formation of these libraries, which the Board consider as the complement and necessary result of the school system, (for of what avail are the keys of knowledge if there are no accessible stores to unlock ?) the Board projected the preparation of two series of books, of fifty volumes each, to consist of such works as they should unanimously approve, the one series for the use of children, and the other for persons of maturer age. For this purpose, having made proposals to various publishing houses, they engaged one to undertake the work, at the lowest rate at which it could be done. The districts are left to exercise their own option as to the purchase of these volumes, the whole action of the Board extending only to providing, that many of the most approved scientific and literary works in the language shall be printed in a suitable style, and afforded at a price which shall put them within the reach of the districts, and to securing in their preparation the aid of distinguished writers.

Two Normal Schools went into operation in the course of the year ; one at Lexington, for females, the other for pupils of both sexes, at Barre ; the former in July, under the superintendence of a gentleman long and favorably known as a teacher at Nantucket ; the latter in September, under the charge of a gentleman who had been for many years a professor, of high reputation, in Bowdoin College.

The Second Report of the Secretary begins with an account of his own official action. After despatching his preparatory circulars to the school committees of each town in the Commonwealth, he visited the fourteen counties, and at convenient places met such of the friends of education as chose to assemble. These conventions were generally well attended, and the time was employed in discussions on the processes of teaching, statements as to the condition of the schools, and the delivery of one or more addresses.

At Nantucket, with which place his circuit commenced, he met most encouraging evidence of the activity of a generous spirit of improvement. Within the year, the town had added

to the single set of public schools previously existing, schools for little children, who before had not been provided for, and a school of a higher character for the benefit of all the children who should entitle themselves to admission by passing a satisfactory examination in the studies of the secondary schools. This perfect and systematized organization offers a noble example for many of the other large towns in the State. Mr. Mann takes occasion, from the institution of these schools for the younger pupils, to introduce his views upon their proper management.

“The small children are provided for, by themselves. This is an advantage which can hardly be overestimated. For the purpose of preserving order and silence in schools, composed of scholars of all ages, it becomes almost necessary to practise a rigor of restraint and a severity of discipline upon the small children, which is always injurious, and often cruel. The youngest scholars are, constitutionally, most active. Their proportion of brain and nervous system, compared with the whole body, is much the greatest. Their restlessness does not proceed from volition, but from the involuntary impulses of nature. They vibrate at the slightest touch; and they can no more help a responsive impulse at every sight and sound, than they can help seeing and hearing with open eyes and ears. What aggravates the difficulty is, that they have nothing to do. At a time, when nature designs they shall be more active than at any other period of life, a stagnation of all the powers of mind and body is enforced. But while the heart beats and the blood flows, the signs of life cannot be wholly suppressed; and, therefore, the steady working of nature’s laws is sure to furnish the teacher with occasions for discipline. If it would be intolerably irksome for any of the large scholars to sit still for half a day, in a constrained posture, with hands unoccupied, and eyes looking straight into vacancy, how much more intolerable is it for the small ones? Hence the importance of having such a gradation of schools, in every place where it is practicable, as has been lately established in Nantucket. Another invaluable advantage of having three grades of schools is, that while it diminishes, at least one half, the number of classes in each school, it increases the number in each class, and thus allows the teacher to devote more time to the recitations and to the oral instruction of his enlarged classes.” — *Second Report*, pp. 29, 30.

Another encouraging fact, observed at the same place, was the conversion of a flourishing private school into a public one,

to the manifest advantage of all persons concerned. Many improvements had also been made here and in other places, in the school houses, particularly in providing for ventilation. Various other evidences of increased interest are noticed, but none more gratifying than the appointment, at the county conventions, of committees to provide lectures on the subject of education in the several towns of the respective counties. Lectures, on this plan, were delivered, in seven of the counties.

After some observations on the value and "form" of the registers required to be kept in the public schools, and on the union of school districts, the Secretary proceeds to the more immediately important matters of intelligent reading, and the modes adopted in teaching to spell. These he had made prominent objects of inquiry throughout his circuit, and for that purpose had prepared written questions, as to the length of time for which the children continued in the spelling classes, and the degree of intelligence they showed in reading.

In answer to the first, he found that the usual and almost invariable practice was, for children to be drilled in spelling, daily, during the whole time of their continuing in school, and yet that the art was imperfectly acquired. The answers to the other questions were scarcely more satisfactory.

"The result [of his inquiries] is, that more than eleven-twelfths of all the children in the reading classes in our schools do not understand the meaning of the words they read; that they do not master the sense of the reading lessons, and that the ideas and feelings intended by the author to be conveyed to, and excited in, the reader's mind, still rest in the author's intention, never having yet reached the place of their destination." — *Second Report*, p. 56.

He enters upon a full discussion of the nature of written and spoken language, and the various modes commonly used at the public schools in learning to read and write it, together with an examination of the books in common use, as the instruments employed for the attainment of that end. He shows satisfactorily, and with his characteristic wealth of illustration, that both methods and books are, to a deplorable degree, unphilosophical and bad, and inconsistent with what should be an object constantly kept in view, the forming "an invincible habit of never using the organs of speech by themselves, and as an apparatus, detached from, and independent of, the

mind." The fatal error seems to be the general impression that rhetorical reading is something mechanical, which can be acquired independently of any exercise of the understanding, and in disregard of the elemental truth that a "fitting style of delivery is born of intelligence and feeling only, and can have no other parentage." Of the excellent views and principles of this disquisition, we have no doubt that we shall see abundant fruit, in the processes of teaching to be hereafter matured and adopted in the schools of this Commonwealth.

In December, 1839, the "Third Annual Reports of the Board of Education, and of their Secretary," and "The Abstract of the Massachusetts School Returns, for 1838-9," prepared by the Secretary, were presented, and made their appearance early in 1840.

The action of the Board and the Secretary, in regard to the county conventions, had been similar to that of former years. Conventions were held in each county, at all of which the Secretary was present, and delivered addresses on the necessity of education, as a preparation for personal and social duties; and discussions on important subjects took place. The influence of these conventions cannot but be most auspicious to the cause of common-school instruction. The feeling upon the subject is everywhere, with few exceptions, right; and it seems only necessary for the friends of education in the various parts of the Commonwealth to be excited to think and examine for themselves, by being brought together to compare their views, and by being informed what is doing and has been done in some parts, and may be done in all, for the principle of voluntary action to operate with the most desirable effects.

The Report of the Board is occupied with an account of the principle on which the Normal Schools have gone into operation, and of the views held and the measures taken in the preparation of books for the Common-School Library.

The Report of the Secretary states some facts which indicate improvement and increasing interest in what relates to the schools, especially the construction of school houses. Still, he insists, much more extensive reforms are necessary.

"Every other class of edifices, whether public or private, has felt the hand of reform. Churches, court houses, even jails and prisons, are rebuilt, or remodelled, great regard being paid, in most cases to ornament, and in all cases to health, to personal convenience and accommodation. But the school house, which leads directly towards the church, or rather may

be considered as its vestibule, and which furnishes to the vast majority of our children, the only public means they will ever enjoy for qualifying themselves to profit by its counsels, its promises, its warnings, its consolations ; — the school house, which leads directly from the court house, from the jail, and from the prison, and is, for the mass of our children, the great preventive and safeguard against being called or forced into them, as litigants or as criminals ; — this class of buildings, all over the State, stands in afflicting contrast with all the others.” — *Third Report*, pp. 39, 40.

The benevolence of some gentlemen, in the counties of Hampshire and Hampden, had been interested in the condition of the children of the transient population along the line of the Western railroad, so effectively, that a very large majority of these children, of a suitable age, were brought to enjoy the benefits of common-school education. Another fact of the same character is also stated, most honorable to the agents. The law of April, 1837, providing “for the better instruction of youth employed in manufacturing establishments,” required that no child under the age of fifteen years should be employed in any such establishment, who had not attended regularly a day school for at least three out of the twelve months next preceding any year in which he should be employed. This law is best observed in the largest manufacturing places.

“In one case (at Waltham), a corporation, besides paying its proportion of taxes for the support of the public schools in the town, has gratuitously erected three school houses, — the last in 1837, a neat, handsome, modern, stone building, two stories in height, — and maintained schools therein, at a charge, in the whole, upon the corporate funds, of a *principal* sum of more than seven thousand dollars. It would be improper for me here to be more particular than to say, that these generous acts have been done by the ‘*Boston Manufacturing Company*’ ; though all will regret, that the identity of the individual members, who have performed these praiseworthy deeds, should be lost in the generality of the corporate name.” — *Third Report*, p. 42.

The Secretary insists upon the vital importance of executing this wise law in accordance with its spirit, and earnestly points out the moral and social dangers of ignorance in this class of the population. He then, having premised some statements, tending to show the very small number and trifling character of the books to be found in most private houses out

of the large towns, goes into a searching inquiry as to the means of instruction, in the form of libraries, public and private, and lectures, enjoyed by the people of the Commonwealth. For this purpose he had addressed to the school committees, and other intelligent persons in every town, a number of questions tending to elicit information as to the numbers, value, and character of books in the public libraries, and the number of persons who have access to them, and as to the lyceums and other associations for popular lectures and the number of persons attending them. He received answers from all but sixteen towns, having an aggregate population of about twenty-one thousand. The total number of social libraries, in the other towns, was found to be 299, containing 180,028 volumes, estimated to be worth \$ 191,538·00, and accessible by 25,705 persons in their own right. In addition to which there are from 10 to 15 *town* libraries, to which all the citizens of the town have a right of access, and which contain 3000 or 4000 volumes ; and about 50 district-school libraries, containing about 10,000 volumes.

Supposing each share-holder of the social libraries to represent four persons, there will be a fraction over 100,000 persons who have access to these libraries, leaving a population of more than 600,000 that have no such right of access. Taking in the libraries of the colleges and other academic institutions, the whole number of volumes in all the public libraries, of all kinds, in the State, is about 300,000, to which little more than one-seventh part of the population have access. One hundred of the towns heard from have neither a town, social, nor district-school library. Well may the Secretary say, in view of this vast want, " For the poor man and the laboring man, the art of printing seems hardly yet to have been discovered."

The discussion of the character of the materials of which the social and town libraries are usually composed, and of their adaptation to the minds of the young, to supply their intellectual and moral wants, and to prepare them for the duties of social and public life, forms a dark and melancholy chapter ; while the eloquent and vigorous tone in which the portentous deficiencies are pointed out, kindles a hope, — almost gives an assurance, — that it will not be allowed to continue. A small portion of the volumes, that fill the shelves of these libraries, are what, a few years since, were regarded as the standard histories, books that have enjoyed a higher estima-

tion than at present ; books filled with the stories of the rise and fall of thrones, and the battles between the kings of the Old World. And this is the most valuable portion. A much more considerable part consists of the merest trash, the novels and romances by which we have been so inundated within a few years. What kind of preparation is the reading of these, to young persons entering upon the solemn duties of life ?

“ For the appropriate and punctual discharge of these numerous and ever-recurring duties, a knowledge of all the scenes and incidents, the loves and hates, the despairs and raptures, contained in all the fictions ever written, is about as fit a preparation, as a knowledge of all the ‘ castles in the air,’ ever built by visionaries and dreamers, would be to the father of a houseless family, who wished to erect a dwelling for their shelter, but was wholly ignorant both of the materials and the processes, necessary for the work.” — *Ibid.*, p. 68.

In the year ending July, 1839, there were within the State eight Mechanics’ Institutes, consisting of 1439 members, and 137 Lyceums, or similar associations, attended by an average of 32,698 persons, the whole furnishing lectures at an aggregate expense of \$20,197.00 ; of which more than one half was expended for that purpose in the city of Boston. On the lectures here given, as they have hitherto been conducted, though excellent as far as they go, no reliance can be placed for any very valuable instruction. In addition to these means, there are the Sabbath-School libraries, a most important item, containing in one denomination above 100,000 volumes, and in another 50,000. These are mostly upon the paramount subject of religion.

The great question arises, whether any further means are necessary to promote the intelligence and encourage the self-culture of the rising generation. Of the facts stated and considerations presented in the discussion of this topic, of the views taken of the present intellectual and social condition and of the future prospects of a large portion of the population of the State, and of the arguments thence drawn for the establishment of the District-School Libraries, so condensed and so weighty, we could give no adequate idea but by transferring them entire to our pages.

In September appeared the Abstract of the Massachusetts School Returns for 1839 – 40, a volume of near five hundred pages, most laboriously compiled by the Secretary from

the Returns and Reports of the school committees of *three hundred and one* of the *three hundred and seven* towns of the Commonwealth. The reports alone amounted to more than two thousand compactly-written letter-paper pages. Thus, in less than three and a half years from the creation of the Board, there have been prepared and laid before the people of Massachusetts, in the Reports of the Board and their Secretary, and in these three volumes of School Returns, the most extraordinary and altogether the most valuable collection of documents in regard to Common-School education, that has ever appeared.

The Abstracts, chiefly made up, as the last two are, of selections from the reports of the school committees, are the natural effect, the worthy return, of the principles and views that have been presented by the Board. The seed has been sown broad-cast through the land, and we are beginning to see its fruits.

It would, however, be great injustice to consider these reports as the echo of any men's opinions. They show the free, vigorous action of strong minds, under the influence of the highest motives, upon subjects of commanding interest. It has been the good fortune of the Board, called into being by the will of the legislature, to concentrate the public attention more fully than had hitherto been done, upon the condition of the schools, and, in their own reports, or by their Secretary, to point out and give distinctness to those particulars in their condition, which are of most immediate importance. Fortunately for the State, there were men ready and able so to carry out the views of the legislature. But most fortunate for all is it, and most auspicious to the cause of improvement, that in every part of the State are found men capable not only of appreciating, but of expanding and rendering more practical, every useful suggestion that has been presented to them. In the volumes of "School Returns," particularly that for 1839 - 40, we have the mature opinions of some hundreds of minds, of high intelligence, of enlarged views, apparently above all sinister influences, full of philanthropy and practical experience, earnestly engaged in devising means for the improvement of the common schools. Their opinions, and the facts on which they are grounded, are embodied in reports, which were read (so the statute requires) in open town meeting, and accepted as expressions of the opinions of the assembled citizens. They are thus the

collected wisdom of the people of the State, on what relates to the most precious of its institutions, and, as such, of the highest authority, and deserving of the most respectful attention. These opinions and statements in regard to certain points, we propose, so far as our limits will allow, to examine.

The language of the Reports, from which these volumes are made up, indicates throughout, in the strongest manner, the attachment with which the *system* is regarded ; the sense entertained of its essential and fundamental value to free institutions, of its capacity for indefinite improvement, and of the unmeasured good it is susceptible of accomplishing. But the patriotic men who have drawn up these Reports, — and no volume ever written gives evidence of more true patriotism, — are willing to look upon the system as it is, to see its defects, and to consult together for the remedies.

The great and pressing want, — that in comparison with which most of the others sink into insignificance, — is the want of well-qualified teachers. This indeed is now felt to be the great want of the civilized world. In only one country is it fully supplied ; it is only since the beginning of the present century that it has been realized, and any systematic attempt made to supply it. In every State of the American Union, where any one has looked into the condition of the instruction of the great masses of the children, the universal cry is, as in almost all the countries of the Old World, “ Better teachers ! ”

This want was never so deeply felt in Massachusetts as at this present moment. There is no subject brought so constantly and so prominently before the reader throughout these volumes. In many parts of the State, the standard, by the confession of the committees, is very low, and yet it is impossible to find teachers who can come up to it. There is a mournful uniformity in the tone of the complaints from all quarters upon this point. They come, in great numbers, from nearly every county in the State. We had marked some of these representations to lay before our readers. But they would be only so many repetitions of a perfectly uncontradicted fact. Not a committee thinks its teachers good enough ; not one but is aware how much more might be done by perfectly competent teachers.

No more serious question in regard to the schools can be asked, than the question, How is this want to be supplied ? It is not enough that better teachers are everywhere in de-

mand. The better teachers are nowhere to be had. It has been supposed that they exist, but are occupied in other pursuits, and that higher wages would call them to the work. This is true in a few instances ; but it cannot be in many. In most towns in the Commonwealth, the best qualified individuals do actually teach in the winter schools. Those, who have never taught, are usually conscious that they could not teach well without instruction themselves, and are doubtful whether they should succeed ; and those, who have had some experience in teaching, have been such teachers as are at present employed, only with a standard less high, and with inferior qualifications. The character of each individual, as a teacher, and his modes of teaching, of arranging classes and studies, and of governing, depend in a great degree upon the character of the schools in which he was himself taught. Teaching is, in many particulars, an art, and, like all other arts, its processes are transmitted from hand to hand. How, then, are better teachers to be formed, to supply this great and increasing demand ?

In the first place, it will undoubtedly be found, that, in consequence of the greater attention given to the schools, and especially in those districts in which the parents take a strong personal interest, and frequently visit the schools, the present teachers will be improved. Hitherto skill in teaching has been almost exclusively a consequence of personal experience. The teachers have begun entirely ignorant of their art. The good old custom of serving an apprenticeship in teaching has long since passed away, and nothing has yet come in to take its place. The good teachers have been made such at the expense of experiments upon their pupils. By this process every teacher is improved ; and those, who enter upon the work with a hearty desire to excel in it, a genuine love of it, and a peculiar talent for it, will often arrive at excellence.

Then there have been some good books written on the subject of teaching, which will materially aid those who desire to improve themselves. Such are "The Teacher," by Jacob Abbott, "Lectures on School-Keeping," by S. R. Hall, and an excellent little book, "The Teacher Taught," by E. Davis. Many valuable suggestions may be gained from these, and there is evidence, in the volume before us, that they have already done good. The school committee of Middleborough, notice "the schools which have been taught

upon the Abbott system " in terms of high commendation, and recommend Mr. Abbott's work to the perusal of teachers. Much valuable instruction is given in the Numbers of the "Common School Journal," particularly in the extracts from Palmer's Prize "Essays," an important addition to the school-master's library, lately issued from the press. The lectures delivered before the American Institute, now forming ten volumes, contain the suggestions of some of the best thinkers on various matters interesting to the teacher, and often give the fruits of the observation and practical wisdom of veteran instructors. But these, however valuable as helps, cannot serve to form the character of the teacher, any more than a law library, without previous practice or apprenticeship, would form an accomplished lawyer.

Much may be expected from the teachers' meetings. In every instance in which the instructors of a town have associated together, and had regular meetings for discussion, and comparison of opinions and experience, a visible effect of the most beneficial kind has been produced on their schools. Wherever this can be done, therefore, it should be done; and the school committees, so far as lies in their power, should see to it, that neither the fact that the teachers have been strangers to each other, nor distance, nor the shortness of their engagement, should prevent them from meeting together.

By all these means, the teachers may be somewhat, and often very much, improved. But, after all, for the accomplishment of this great object, we must look to the Normal Schools, and other places for the preparation of teachers. And already the eyes of the friends of the schools are directed thitherward.

The Normal Schools, whenever mentioned in the Returns, are spoken of in terms which show how much is expected from them. As the policy of the legislature in providing for the education of teachers is still, however, sometimes questioned, it may be well to examine some of the evidences and grounds of the opinion, very generally existing in the minds of the friends of education, of the necessity of such a provision, and of the wisdom of giving continued support to a course of measures for the purpose.

The first, we believe, who brought this subject prominently before the public, was the author of "Letters on the

Free Schools of New England." These appeared in 1824, and were followed soon after by valuable "Essays" on the subject by the same writer. In 1825, a series of essays appeared in the "Connecticut Observer," and afterwards separately, from the pen of T. H. Gallaudet, late Principal of the American Asylum for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb, upon a "Plan of a Seminary for the Education of Instructors of Youth." In these, he recommends the project, with a great variety of arguments. At a meeting of the American Institute, held August 29th, 1836, after the subject of "the professional education of teachers" had been discussed, the following resolves were passed; that "the business of teaching should be performed by those who have studied the subject of instruction as a profession," and that "there ought to be at least one seminary in each State, devoted exclusively to the education of teachers."

The qualifications spoken of by the school committees as essential to the character of a good teacher, and which would, by great numbers of them, be considered indispensable, if it were possible to consider the highest qualifications indispensable, and find any teachers for the schools, are such as can only be found, with some rare exceptions, in those who have undergone a specific preparation. To say nothing of the positive acquirements which a teacher should possess, of the familiar acquaintance he should have with arithmetic, with geography, and with history, interesting facts in which may be thrown in continually in teaching geography, or of the skill he should have in reading and in penmanship; he ought to possess a knowledge of various methods of teaching these branches. Now, this knowledge of methods, of their modes of operation, and of their success, can be acquired only by opportunities of hearing them fully and familiarly discussed, and of seeing them in operation. This might be done by an association of teachers, so situated as to meet together every evening, for months in succession, and have classes of their pupils meet with them. But it can be most successfully done only at a school where the attention can be turned to such points for a long time together, under the superintendence of an able and experienced teacher. There are no branches in which such flagrant deficiencies are felt, and so many improvements are to be made, as in these essentials and staples of the district schools.

A good instructor must have aptness to teach. The want of this is lamented, in multitudes of instances, in persons otherwise possessed of excellent qualities. Aptness to teach is unquestionably a peculiar gift, like a talent for painting or for mechanics. But, like them, it must be perfected by much use, under skilful masters. A moderate talent of this kind, highly cultivated, will be more effectual than great talent without cultivation ; which can be given only by exercising the faculty under the eye and guidance of one who can point out failures and suggest the remedy. Where can this be done but in a place of preparation for teachers ?

The teacher must have ability to manage and govern. This talent is more rare even than the last mentioned. And although it partly depends on a particular organization, and is found very widely different in different individuals, it can no more spring at once into perfect activity, than the talent for marshalling armies. The talent for governing children to the best end depends chiefly on perfect self-control. But when we include in it that directing power which can bring into vigorous action all the powers of a child, keeping the lower in just subordination to the higher, and having in view the greatest permanent good of the individual, it comprehends, in its exercise, a complete knowledge of the character of the pupil, with all the motives and springs of action, for good and for ill. It is needless to say, that a talent, which requires for its full exercise the complete survey of so wide a field, cannot be easily matured. All the helps that can be administered will still leave enough for the individual to do.

It is not easy to overstate the importance of this power of controlling, or the extent of its influence on the future well-being of the pupil. On the susceptible child, on one who is delicately constituted, the influence of the gifted teacher is all but omnipotent. His power to repress the bad, and to stimulate the good tendencies, is almost unbounded. Not only his intentional teachings, but his words, his manners, his looks, the tone of his voice, his smile and his frown, sink into the heart of the child, and control his inmost being. It is a beautiful trait in the character of children, that their sympathy with the exalted and generous qualities is far stronger than with their opposites. The malignant and selfish qualities excite, indeed, but they excite to opposition. They

call out corresponding qualities for self-defence. They excite, but it is to aversion and hatred. It would be well, if these feelings could be prevented from going beyond the hateful object ; but the evil propensities are blind, and being once excited in a child against an unfeeling, unjust, or selfish teacher, they extend also towards learning, order, discipline, intelligence, refinement, — all the qualities of which the hated individual is supposed to be the representative.

It is apparent, then, that too much attention cannot be given by school committees, in the selection of teachers, to every thing which goes to form the moral character of the candidate ; and it is most gratifying to find, that many of the committees are fully aware of the importance of these considerations.

Further, it is obvious that the teacher, in order to be able to accomplish all that he ought, in the performance of his high duties, should be familiar with the elements of the human constitution in its two-fold nature ; with the growth of the mind, the nature of the moral sentiments and the mental faculties, and the formation of mental habits ; and with the physiology of the body, on the healthfulness of which, the developement and energy of the moral and intellectual qualities must depend. Here are two paths, each leading into wide fields of human knowledge. Can they be traversed without study ? Will the unaided sagacity of all who are to teach, direct them to precisely what is most essential in these extensive sciences ?

Again, every teacher should be acquainted with the elements of natural science ; with something of Natural History, Natural Philosophy, and Chemistry. There is not a day in school, which might not be enlivened by the description of some natural object ; there is hardly an hour, during which an occasion does not occur for drawing the attention to some appearance presented, or some process going on, or for giving information of some interesting fact. Most of the children at the common schools are destined to the happy lot of spending their lives in the country. One would think, that a prominent object of elementary education, there at least, should be to make them acquainted with the objects by which they are always to be surrounded. The naturalist finds, in the study of these objects, inexhaustible sources of pleasure ; and, though it might be absurd to attempt to make

all children naturalists, it would certainly be well to put those who have a taste for such pursuits within reach of these fountains of simple, innocent, and never-ceasing enjoyment. At least, they should have that knowledge of the properties of the objects about them, which would enable them to turn them to some use.

We have enumerated only the most important of the parts of knowledge which should be possessed by the teachers of the common schools, and some of the endowments, for which they should be distinguished. If the Union District System should go generally into operation, as we trust it will, a higher class of schools would be created, with more advanced studies, and requiring additional and higher qualifications in the teachers. It is apparent, then, that the Normal Schools are imperiously called for by the wants of the common schools as they now exist, and are still more essential in view of the great improvements which the system is destined to receive.

Another of the greatest and most universal evils, and one, of which the loudest complaints are made in the reports, is the multiplicity of school books. In very many schools, the time of the teacher is frittered away in hearing several classes in the same study, merely because the pupils have not all the same text-books; when, if they were all in one class, the teacher could spend that time in communicating instruction which is now occupied in asking questions and hearing answers. The committee have power to remedy this defect, by selecting the books to be used in the schools, and requiring uniformity. But this is a power which they are almost always unwilling to exercise. It can hardly be exercised without giving offence. Yet there is scarcely a matter in which it is so important that an umpire should act. If the choice is left to the parents, they must, almost of necessity, choose different books. If left, as it often is, to the teachers, there can be no uniformity, so long as they are liable to be changed every year, as each successive teacher will have his favorite text-books, which he will require all those, who have no books, to procure. An effectual remedy would be in requiring the school committee, by a vote of the town, to exercise this power in reference to every school. This might often be done, almost without expense, though not without a little trouble, by selecting a different text-book for each of

two or three contiguous schools, and encouraging the exchange of books among those children of the several schools who did not wish to be at the expense of new ones. The evil has been remedied, in some instances, by causing a depository to be formed somewhere in the town for the books recommended by the committee, and furnishing them thus at reduced prices. This is certainly better than the course which is recommended and almost demanded in some of the "Reports," that the Board of Education should make the selection. If this were done, many books would be rapidly thrown out of circulation throughout the State. The schools would certainly be, in many instances, great gainers by the loss; but individual authors and publishers would suffer severely, and the schools might eventually suffer from the check upon the freedom of competition in the authors of their future text-books. If the selection be left to the towns, all the books now in use may be continued, without any of the mischievous confusion which now takes place; and the worthless books be left to die out, as they certainly will, before the searching scrutiny which is now turned upon the schools.

While upon this subject of books used in the schools, we cannot refrain from expressing our earnest desire, that some portion, at least, of the New Testament should always be one. If all the families in the Commonwealth were religious, it would be a matter of less importance, though it would then probably be a matter of course. But, as long as there are any children in the schools who may not otherwise become familiar with this volume, we think it ought to be, in some way or other, used in every school. If a portion of it is read to the school each day by the teacher, perhaps no greater or better use could or need be made of it. But if this is not done, let it be one of the class-books, and, if possible, for the highest class.

The subject of moral instruction has been mournfully neglected in the public schools, and we are rejoiced to see evidence of an awakened attention to this most important part of education. The subject, however, is of such extent, that we must pass it by with the single expression of the satisfaction we have in believing that great good will result from the strong, but just, representations made in relation to it in many of the Reports.

Another subject, of almost universal complaint with the

school committees, is want of interest in the schools on the part of parents and guardians. There is but one opinion as to the advantage of their frequently visiting the schools ; and yet, in many places, most parents never see them, nor ever take the pains to become acquainted with the teacher. It is hardly conceivable, that a parent should be indifferent to the physical welfare and happiness of his offspring for so large a portion of their lives, or to the moral and mental qualities of those, who are to have so important an influence on their whole future character. There must be some general mistake on this subject ; some feeling, on the part of parents, that their visits would not be acceptable ; that their presence might be looked on as an intrusion. It can only be for some such reason, that fathers, and, especially, that mothers should so forego their natural rights, and neglect so important and obvious a duty. If parents could but realize, how full of fears and misgivings a teacher often is, how lonely and unsustained he is apt to feel, and how much they can do to lighten the heavy burden of his difficult and perplexing duties by a kind suggestion, or a judicious word of commendation, how much a generous expression of confidence will quicken his feeling of responsibility, elevate his sense of character, and stimulate him to increased diligence, — and how completely, on the other hand, a little unreasonable complaint, very easy to utter, will thwart his best efforts, and neglect and distrust discourage his well-meant exertions, — instead of meeting him with reserve, and watching his faults with jealousy, they would welcome him as a fellow-laborer, cheer him by their confidence, sustain his authority by their countenance, admit him sometimes into their families, and show him they are his friends. And, if they would but remember, how much the heart of a child is alive to sympathy, they would sometimes visit his place of labor, and, if at no other time, at least let him have the pleasure of anticipating their presence on the days of examination. Such considerations are feelingly and repeatedly urged throughout these Reports ; and if no other good should come from them than the establishing of a better understanding between parents and teachers, they would be richly worth all the labor, great as that is, and all the expense, which they have cost. And it is impossible to read them without feeling confident, that this will be their effect. There is such a thing as sympathy between man and man, and these

powerful appeals to it cannot, from the nature of human affections, be unavailing.

The very general want of apparatus in the schools is only another indication of the humble character of the teaching. It is, however, gratifying to perceive, that the necessity of apparatus is becoming more and more general. The articles, which are thought most necessary, are black boards, maps, globes, and philosophical and chemical apparatus. Still more important, as more universally necessary, would seem to be apparatus to illustrate, or rather to render intelligible, the tables of weights and measures, which are usually required to be learnt by children, as ignorant of their meaning as if the words were in a foreign language. The obtuseness or entire ignorance, not uncommonly observed, in many persons otherwise intelligent, as to what relates to the measurement of solids, and even of surfaces, may doubtless be traced to their having failed to get definite ideas from the earliest lessons given them at school. It is one, out of numerous instances that might be given, of a mistake, almost universal, in teaching the elements of natural science, that the lesson containing the abstract principle is presented first, and the illustration, or experiment, afterwards. The natural order, it is almost too obvious to remark, is to present, first, the objects, or the experiments, — the nearest approach that we can make to the thing itself, or to the principle in nature, — and afterwards the statements, deductions, and generalizations, which are founded upon them.

Another kind of apparatus, that should be in all the schools, is a series of geometrical figures and solids, all that are in common use and whose names form a part of the language, for the express purpose of teaching language. What other sure way is there of teaching the meaning of *cubic*, *conical*, *cylindrical*, and other similar words, that are constantly occurring, than by showing the figures, or, still better, the cube, cone, and cylinder themselves?

A large portion of the Reports is, of course, occupied with observations upon the manner of conducting the common business of the schools, the teaching of spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic. Of this we shall have room to say but few words.

As to the important art of *spelling*, though there are numerous complaints of the poor success with which attempts

are made to teach it, there are very few, who seem to have any idea how it should be done. The absurd practice of spending years in spelling nonsense columns has been so long established, and become so general, that most persons are disposed to submit to it as if it were a decree of fate. We are rejoiced to see, that the delusion is not universal. Hear the committee of Freetown.

“As to *spelling*, there seems to be no good reason, why children should be kept drilling on unintelligible words for half a dozen years of their first school-going days. No wonder, that, where this course has been pursued, children have become weary of school, and hated their books. It is dry, toilsome, and uninteresting. They need to have something which they can understand, about which they can think ; for, to learn to think correctly, and how to express our thoughts in language and in writing accurately, is a very important object of education. True, a little time must be taken, to learn the letters and their uses ; but instruction and amusement ought to be mingled with it. As soon as they can pronounce a syllable, set them to read easy words ; or, better still, let them learn their letters by the use of sentences composed of words of one syllable ; or from the names of animals and familiar objects connected with their pictures ; and they will find it a pleasure. Let them spell them as an amusement, and not as the main object. Let them also have slates to occupy them a part of every half day, and they will soon learn to make letters, figures, pictures, maps, and learn to write considerably, besides becoming tolerable readers in *three* or *four* years, — the time often consumed in spelling alone. Let every child in school have a small slate, or a part of one, and he will love to go to school. We have known children learn to write very well at five and seven years old by the use of the slate alone. The older scholars, who can write easily, should write ten or fifteen words, as there is time, every day, instead of spelling. This is all the practical use of spelling, that we make, except reading ; and spelling is, after all, mostly learned by reading. Those who spell by the ear, may *guess* right, but let them spell by the eye, that is, in writing a letter, for instance, — the object for which they need to spell, — and perhaps half of their words will be spelled wrong. We have known some, who never spelled in the common way, but have learned by reading and writing, who hardly ever spell a word wrong.” — *School Returns for 1839 – 40*, pp. 390, 391.

This is admirable ; and the only wonder is, so just and

philosophical are these observations, that they should not have occurred to all observers. We cannot but think, that nearly all the time, now spent in spelling, is lost, and far worse than lost, as it does very little to teach children to spell, while it does all that can be done to *teach them not to think*. The truth of the whole matter lies in two facts, perfectly obvious, yet seldom seen, that spelling is really addressed to the eye, and not to the ear ; and that the *names* of the letters, in our language, have often only the most distant connexion with their power.

Another subject, closely connected with this, and dependent upon it, is, the manner and success with which reading is taught. Most of the faults that prevail, are traceable to two sources, incompetent teachers and unsuitable books. None but a teacher of sense, and feeling, and cultivated taste, can be successful in communicating this beautiful accomplishment ; and even such a teacher cannot easily do it, unless he has suitable books. Let the committees, therefore, take care to secure well-qualified teachers, and to introduce good books, and the correct reading will be sure to follow. How difficult of attainment the first of these objects is, has been sufficiently shown. There is hardly less difficulty as to the other. A very small portion of the great number of books of this class are at all suited to the wants of the schools. They aim far above the mark, and infinitely overshoot it.

“ Certainly from no ancient, probably from no other modern language, could such a selection of literary excellences be made, as some of them exhibit ; — demonstrative arguments on the most abstruse and recondite subjects, tasking the acuteness of practised logicians, and appreciable only by them ; — brilliant passages of parliamentary debates, whose force would be irresistible, provided only that one were familiar with all contemporary institutions and events ; — scenes from dramas, beautiful if understood, but unintelligible without an acquaintance with heathen mythology ; — wit, poetry, eloquence, whose shafts, to the vision of educated minds, are quick and refulgent as lightning, but giving out, to the ignorant, only an empty rumbling of words, — every thing, in fine, may be found in their pages, which can make them, at once, worthy the highest admiration of the learned, and wholly unintelligible to children.” — *Secretary's Second Report*, pp. 62, 63.

As might be expected from the use of such means, the

style of reading is apt to be rhetorical and unnatural. One thing, however, ought to be insisted on, and, being a mechanical thing, it may be accomplished with any set of books. We speak of correct and full enunciation. Want of this is the great fault of our schools. And yet it is, perhaps, the only thing, in regard to reading, entirely within the control of the teacher.*

The complaints, which are numerous, upon the multiplicity of studies pursued at one time, upon bad arrangement in the studies, and upon want of thoroughness, resolve themselves into that which has already been enlarged upon, the incompetency of teachers. Yet, while the teachers remain as they are, the school committees will often have occasion to interpose, to give a right direction upon these points ; and those, who have not had occasion to give to them much thought, will find some most valuable suggestions in the work of a veteran school-visiter already referred to, "*The Teacher's Manual.*"

A subject of preëminent importance to the welfare of the schools, is the character and duties of the school committees, and, in his first Report, the Secretary presented this at some length, and with great ability. A great change has already been wrought in some parts of the Commonwealth, which needed it most. Better men are chosen to the office, and, now that they are paid for their services, are expected to perform its duties. These volumes afford abundant evidence, that these duties are generally understood, and their importance felt ; and, if the excellent practice of publishing the Reports is continued, they soon will be so, universally. Every suggestion, made by any committee, no matter where situated, no matter how little known, goes to add to the common light ; and observations upon some of the poorest schools in the Commonwealth will serve to improve the best. If continued, the "*School Returns*" will be to the school committee-man and to the teacher, what the Term Reports are to the lawyer, or the Reports of Cases to the physician. Something, however, still remains to be done ; for, from twenty-eight towns the committees have sent no reports,

* There is a little manual, called "*Lessons in Enunciation,*" by William Russell, which contains all the important principles, clearly expressed and aptly illustrated. It should be in every school. Its price is a mere trifle.

and from five they have made no returns for the last year. This is to be regretted. But it is clear, that the people have taken up this thing themselves. Many of the committees are evidently as competent, in all respects, as could anywhere be found. And this good spirit will spread. Reports and returns have this year been received from every town in Middlesex, Hampshire, Norfolk, and Bristol Counties, and from all but one in Hampden, Franklin, and Dukes; and we cannot read these reports but with a feeling of pride, that there are, in all parts of the Commonwealth, men capable of feeling so warmly, and of uttering with such power, the great truths in relation to the condition of the common schools.

It is evident, therefore, that that is done in many towns, which should be done in all. The very best men, those most distinguished for intelligence, for acquirements, and, especially, for their high moral tone, should, alone, be upon the committees. Such men should not, as often heretofore, decline this service. It is, if faithfully performed, always laborious; it is usually ill paid, and often thankless. But these are reasons, why those, who are qualified for it, should not feel at liberty to decline it. It is time this matter were understood. There is not a child, in the poorest district in the country, who might not be so trained, by the means that the schools could present, as to enjoy the highest and purest pleasures that can fall to the lot of the most favored individual. The coming generation has a claim upon the present, not only for liberty, but for those higher advantages which give value to liberty itself. And on whom does this claim rest, if not on those who are capable of feeling it? — upon the men who recognise the duties which the relation between man and man imposes? We have not a right to sit in our studies, enjoying the luxuries of thought, and books, and leisure, and say to our poor brethren without, “Be ye warmed and clad; let the child of the poor and depressed man become wise, and learned, and virtuous, if he can.” Something is to be done. We cannot, believers in a spiritual religion, acknowledge, as we do, the rights of the body to be relieved, and yet remain deaf to the higher wants of the soul. No; we must be consistent; and there must be a spirit worthy of such a cause; not that sycophantic spirit, which is ready to cajole the ignorant and the degraded by flattering them, that they are more competent than any other

men living, to provide suitable education for their children ; but that lofty spirit of truth, which dares to tell them, that education is their great want, and that it will come best, — that it can come only, — from the intelligent and the virtuous. It is the just boast of Massachusetts, that the property of all is taxed for the education of all. Would it not be, at least, as just a cause of boasting, that the talents, and learning, and skill of all were taxed for the instruction of all ?

The Reports, from beginning to end, are full of evidence of the inestimable value of the School Registers. Never before has been brought to view, and in no other way could be brought to view, the vast loss to the people of this Commonwealth from irregularity of attendance at school.

The returns show, that, out of 124,354, who, during the last year, attended the summer schools, the average absences were 31,656, nearly one fourth ; and of 149,222, attending the winter schools, the average absences were, 37,378, still nearly one fourth.

This is an unwelcome statement. One fourth of all the money laid out, and of the time spent by teachers and committees, and, what is of infinitely more consequence, one fourth of all the opportunities presented to the rising generation, lost by irregular attendance ! This is enough to wake up all the friends of the schools to a sense of the greatness of the evil, and to the suggestion of means to lessen it.

Much may doubtless be done by arrangements within the school itself. The introduction of music, as one of the exercises, is found always to have this effect. Children are not willing to be absent from the morning song. The same effect is produced by exhibitions of apparatus. Interesting and intelligible conversation, at the beginning of school-hours, questions upon things, the telling or reading a story or description, that all can understand, will do the same. Every thing, in short, which improves the character of the instruction, will attract children to school. Still, much will be left for those to do, whose duty it is made, by the statutes of the Commonwealth, to check the evils of irregular and negligent attendance.

One object, in preparing reports, is to make known to the inhabitants of each town the actual condition of its schools. The statute upon this point requires, that the “ report shall be read in open town meeting,” “ or be printed and distributed

for the use of the inhabitants." The intent of the statute evidently is, that the inhabitants should be informed of the condition of their schools ; and, as this cannot be done by the first mode required, it would seem to follow, that in the large towns, the Reports should be printed for circulation. We regret to observe, that the committee for the city of Boston made so very short a report, and that it was not printed. Justice to the excellent public schools and their faithful and accomplished teachers seemed to require, that a full report should be made. Justice to the citizens required, that it should be laid before them. In no part of the world, probably, are the public schools receiving more attention, and, although not certainly what they should be, there are probably few places where they have made such progress. If there were no other reason, and there are many others, a report should have been made for the purpose of giving some account of the Public Latin School, a model which might be imitated in many of the large towns of the Commonwealth, and of whose value it is no exaggeration to say, that, open and free as it is to all the boys in the city, there are many individuals, who feel that the expense of their children's education is a secondary consideration with them, and who yet cannot afford to send them to any other school, for at no other could they receive the same thorough, scholarlike, and manly preparation for college or for active life. It is reasonably expected of the school committees, that there shall be at least one public school in every town, so good, that the wealthiest citizens shall not be able to afford to send their children to any other.

Among the many plans proposed, and hints thrown out, in these Returns, for the improvement of the schools, none seems to promise more good than that for the union of school districts.* It is gratifying to see that this project is occupying the

* This scheme, recommended by Mr. Mann in his Report on School Houses, as we have already hinted, contemplates the erection of a central school, equally accessible to four, or more, associated districts, to be provided with a teacher of higher qualifications and employed for a greater length of time, and to be supported by the united action of the districts, with a view to affording a higher order of instruction to children above a certain age ; the several district schools to be continued for the benefit of the younger portion of the pupils, under the instruction of females. He has shown, that, by a union of this kind, a higher class of teachers might be employed, and more efficient instruction be given, not only without additional expense, but with a positive saving.

attention of the committees, and from them receiving a shape suited to the wants of the several towns. It is highly commended and urged, in numerous quarters. In the report from the committee of Goshen, one of the smallest towns in the State, the subject is very fully and ably discussed. Its adoption is urged on the score of economy, the superior advantages it would afford, its harmony with republican institutions, its bringing home the best opportunities of instruction and thus superseding the necessity of sending children abroad, and its general utility to the town, by raising the standard of education, and bringing out the best talent of the community. The committee think the Union School might be kept for six months. In most towns in the Commonwealth it might be kept for nine or ten. And we have no hesitation in saying, that, for all the purposes for which schools ought to be kept, ten months of the year are better than the whole. We consider it far the most important objection to the excellent public schools in Boston, that they are kept for so many weeks. The vacations are too short. It would be better for masters and pupils if they were longer. It is not sufficiently considered, that it is favorable neither to the energy of the mind, nor to the acquisitions made by it, to exercise it when it is over-worn. One reason why children are kept so long at school in the larger towns, is that there are so few suitable, safe, and healthy employments for them while out of school. But it is not so in the country. The operations of husbandry and horticulture offer employment for boys of all ages, the best possible for health of body and of mind.

We have no doubt, that the plan for the union of district schools, well executed, would be productive of all the good anticipated from it, and much more. The objection on the score of the distance is one only in appearance. The walk would be beneficial in ten instances, where it would be injurious in one. But this objection might be obviated, in some measure, by having only one session in the day. One session, from ten to three o'clock, with one or two short recesses, would, especially in the shortest days, be a great saving of time to teachers and pupils, would secure greater punctuality in those who came from a distance, and would avoid the moral evils of the intermission.

An essential part of this plan is, that the winter district schools, as well as the summer schools, should be taught by females. This is the best kind of instruction for children of both sexes, up to the age of ten or twelve, certainly, and perhaps to the age of fourteen. And we confess, we look to the more extensive employment of females, in the schools of the two lower grades, and to the consequent employment of a much smaller number of men, but with much higher qualifications, than heretofore, in the union or town schools, with more confidence of good effects, than to any other improvement on the common-school system that has been proposed. The returns before us, with extraordinary unanimity, confirm this view. And let it be remembered, that the conclusions have been formed on the success of female teachers, who, in a great majority of instances, have enjoyed very imperfect advantages of preparation for their office. They have received their whole education at schools, which may indeed sometimes have been good, but which we know must have been, in most instances, poor. What might not the same native talent have accomplished, if aided by the advantages which are now enjoyed at Lexington or at Barre?

Let then the summer schools as now, and the winter district schools, as far and as soon as possible, be taught by females. But let them be qualified for the office. Let the example of Salem be imitated by every town in the Commonwealth. By a vote of the city council, the city's share of the dividends of the Massachusetts school fund was

“applied in part to the support, for a year, at the Normal School in Lexington, of two young ladies, to be selected from such of the assistants, or older scholars of the east and west female schools, as might need, and would desire to avail themselves of this assistance for the purpose of increasing their qualifications for future service in the public schools. This grant was coupled with stipulations, that the amount advanced should be gradually repaid by a deduction from the salaries to be afterwards allowed them as assistants; so that, in effect, under ordinary circumstances, the grant would prove equivalent to a loan, and would enable the beneficiaries, without apprehension, to anticipate their own resources, and leave it in the power of the committee to continue to provide for the same object by the use of the same means.” — *Massachusetts School Returns*. p. 39.

If this cannot be done for two females, let it be for one ;

and, if not for a year, let it be for a single term. The expenses of a residence at Lexington or Barre are so very moderate, that there are very few towns in the State which might not support a teacher there, for one term each year, by means of its portion of the dividends of the school fund. Let the directors of the Normal Schools make a regulation, that a female, sent by any of the towns, shall be entitled to leave the institution at the end of one quarter, if the town desire it. We believe, that three years would be most profitably spent, by any female teacher in the Commonwealth, at the Normal Schools, as they are now conducted. But yet we are confident, that, in the case of those who have had experience in teaching, the opportunity of seeing the right management of a school, and the right mode of teaching, even for a single quarter, would be an important benefit. Let the most successful teacher be selected, the individual most familiar with the studies and most apt to teach, most heartily engaged in teaching, and most desirous of devoting herself to it till death or marriage. When she returns and resumes her school, let the other female teachers of the town have the advantage of visiting her school, and observing her methods. Such a visit of but half a day, even if repeated but a few times, would often give an improved aspect to the interior of a school. Let the female teachers be encouraged to associate for mutual improvement, and make the experience and skill of each a common fund for the benefit of all. Let the school committees arrange and bring about these meetings. Let them attend them, and take part in them. What admirable lectures upon instruction would many of the authors of these reports make. Some members of the committees have been teachers themselves ; they have long observed the defects of the schools ; they have more or less distinct ideas of their remedies, and of a higher and more efficient system than they have ever seen in operation. Let them bring these cherished fancies out, and, catching zeal from the eager interest of the young and ardent female teachers, whom they will assemble about them, let them plan better schools and better modes of teaching, and urge the teachers to self-cultivation, and stir up the sympathy of the parents in their cause.

The Union District System would establish three grades of schools for all the towns in the State except about ten of

the smallest ; the Summer Schools, the District Winter Schools, and the Union, Central, or Town Schools. The two lower grades would remain as now, except that they would be necessarily improved by the action of the central schools. In each town there might be one central school, as proposed in Goshen, a town of less than six hundred inhabitants ; or two, according to the suggestion from Westhampton, a town of less than nine hundred ; or more, in proportion to the size and convenience of the towns.

Of the numerous advantages, that would follow from this gradation of schools, we shall briefly notice some of the most striking.

One would be the establishment of a gradation of studies. Each class of schools should have certain studies peculiar to itself, an acquaintance with which should be requisite for entering the next higher. This would be a great gain. Nothing is more exciting, or more innocently so, than the expectation of an examination, with something real dependent upon it. The requisite for admission to the summer district school should be four years of age. This is insisted upon by some of the committees, and with great reason. Little is gained by sending children very early to school. They are thus, it is true, out of their parents' way, but not so completely out of harm's way as is usually thought. They are seriously in the way of the improvement of the elder pupils. Very little attention can be given to them, and they are, therefore, in great danger of forming habits of idleness, inattention, and mischief-making in school, of which they cannot afterwards be easily cured.

The requisites for admission to the winter district schools might be seven years of age, and an examination, the character of which should be settled by the school committee. The branches pursued at these schools might be those now taught, together with music, and the elements of natural history, to a specified extent, so as to have a clear line of distinction between these and the union schools.

Schools of the highest grade might be open to none under ten years of age, and to those over that age only after a satisfactory examination in the proper studies of the district schools, with a dispensing power in the committee, to cover extraordinary cases. By these exclusions, space would be left for a much wider range of studies, including, after arithmetic and ge-

ography, drawing, geometry, chemistry, natural history, book-keeping, natural philosophy, astronomy, the history of the United States and general history, surveying, social and civil duties, the elements of politics, grammar, rhetoric, and, where it is desirable, the course of studies required for admission to the colleges. Music ought to be a part of the pursuits of each school.

Another great advantage of this gradation of schools, would be the saving of time, by bringing together children of nearly equal powers and progress ; thus enlarging the classes and diminishing their number, making room for additional studies, and giving more time for *teaching*. A class of twenty may be as easily and as well taught in a given time, as one of five.

The last advantage that we should notice, and by far the greatest, is the way thus opened for making teaching a profession. Many intelligent females, in almost every town and village, would rejoice in the opportunity of devoting themselves for life to the business of instruction. Under the proposed change, they might be employed, winter and summer, as many as eight or nine months, even in the smallest towns, and, in the larger, ten ; a length of time, beyond which no teacher ought to be occupied for years in succession. In this way, and in this way only, perhaps, will a regular profession of teachers, male and female, grow up for the whole State. Under the present system, the smaller towns cannot expect to have a male teacher of the highest qualifications, except by accident. Under the proposed arrangement, by adopting an excellent suggestion of the committee of Wareham, some of the best teachers might be secured even to those union or district schools, that could be kept for only four or five months.

“ We think we hazard nothing in saying, that it would be better for all parties concerned, if we should employ the most competent teachers the whole year, and let them pass from district to district until the year came round, giving to each district its just proportion of time. In this way, a male teacher might be employed in each district a suitable time, and a female in the same district another portion of time. A few teachers of superior quality might thus keep all our schools.” — *Abstract of School Returns, for 1839 - 40*, p. 438.

We can conceive of few situations more honorable, and, for one who could enter upon the work with that ardent

and unaffected love of it, which constitutes the highest qualification, more truly desirable, than that of a permanent teacher of one of these union schools. A man of the highest order of attainments, under the influence of a sentiment of duty, might be happy in such a place.

The Secretary, in his Second Report, says ;

“ The time spent by the scholars in reading, from the age of eight or ten to sixteen years, is amply sufficient to enrich their minds with a great amount of various and useful knowledge, without encroaching one hour upon other accustomed studies.” — *Secretary's Second Report*, p. 43.

We should be willing to use still stronger language. The Union District System, if well executed, as there is every reason to believe it will soon be in many towns, and we hope eventually in all, will give instruction to children from the age of four to sixteen, and, if desirable, to a more advanced age, for eight or nine months of the year. And this, as we have already said, is enough. We have no doubt, that more of every kind of useful knowledge may be acquired, and more thorough discipline given, to all the powers of the mind in nine months, than in twelve. For the perfect development of the powers of the body, and the confirmation of a vigorous and healthy constitution, the shorter period of study is, of course, vastly more desirable. Whoever considers, how many hours of every day in the year are usually lost in listlessness by the jaded pupil of the year-long school, and compares this with the freshness and cheerful alacrity of spirit with which the child comes to his studies, who has been enjoying, for some months, the freedom and open-air exercise of a country life, will be disposed to agree with us. No one, who has had the opportunity, can have failed to observe, how the mind, with the body, of the boy, condemned to toil on through the summer at a city school, has yielded and bent under the burden ; how the ruddy cheek has grown pale, and the elastic step heavy ; how the gay and careless playfulness of spirit, which had made light of tasks, has been gradually exchanged for a listless and plodding fidelity, like the dogged pertinacity of an office drudge ; how completely all the happy buoyancy of childhood has been quelled long before the coming of the brief August vacation. Another, under a better system or a happier fortune, is sent off into the country when the sultry days first come on, there to ride, and make hay,

and gather flowers, and catch fish, or do — what is most absurdly called doing nothing, — to wander about, at will, over hill and dale, looking at all things growing and living, and learning how the country people live. Mark the difference of the two, when the studies begin, at the autumn schools. What is more to the purpose, mark the difference at the end of half a dozen years, and there will be no question about the equal scholarship, and far better character of body, mind, and moral nature, of the child grown up to manhood, who has been allowed to yield to the impulses of nature, and enjoy the summer, as the Author of the summer and the country intended it should be enjoyed.

We say, therefore, that nine, or at farthest ten, months of schooling in a year, are enough for any part of the State and any age of the pupils. And we believe, that the adoption of the Union District System, and the substitution of female for male teachers in the smaller districts, will secure a school for that number of months for nearly every district in the State.

Now we believe, with entire confidence, that, by a proper selection or creation of school books, written on a proper system and adapted to their purpose, with teachers, such as may be furnished and will be furnished by the Normal Schools, — if, by the blessing of God upon this State, and the generous exertions of good men, they shall be carried into full operation, — vastly more may be done in these schools, not only than is now done, but even than the most sanguine friends of the schools dare yet to hope. Whoever will consider, how much time is now lost by the absurd practice of spelling, which is almost universally continued, from the beginning to the end of the course, in all our schools, and by the variety and multiplicity of reading books, almost wholly unintelligible to the greater part of every school; how the vain attempt to cultivate a rhetorical style of reading has been allowed to invade and supplant the paramount object of training the mind, and furnishing it with useful knowledge for future life; how much time is wasted by the incompetency and the frequent changes of teachers; how much the energies of the mind are impaired by poorly warmed, badly lighted, and ill ventilated school rooms; how much is lost by the absence of all system in books and studies, by wrong beginning and bad habits, by the absence, in most places, of

a just classification of pupils, by the indifference of parents, and the faithlessness or incapacity of school committees ; and yet how much, under all these disadvantages, is actually accomplished, — will be prepared to expect momentous changes when these defects are remedied, and these evils, as they will be, are corrected, — and will be prepared to admit, that this confidence of ours is not without foundation.

We close with a few statements from the Abstract of the Returns of last year (1840), which we think will not be found without interest.

Of the three hundred and seven towns in the State, six made no returns. In one or two, the returns do not enable us to determine the amount of money raised for the instruction of children between the ages of four and sixteen. Of the remainder, six raised less than \$ 1·25 to each child between those ages, the proportion required by law to entitle the town to receive its portion of the school fund.

17	raised	between	\$ 1·25	and	\$ 1·50
82	"	"	1·50	"	2·00
82	"	"	2·00	"	2·50
50	"	"	2·50	"	3·00
44	"	"	3·00	"	4·00
13	"	"	4·00	"	5·00

4, viz. Boston, Chelsea, Medford, and Milton, over \$ 5·00.

Thus, only six failed to entitle themselves to the boon offered by the State. Fewer than twenty did just what was required, or somewhat more ; while one hundred and seven raised more than twice the amount required, and many, more than three times that amount. The average raised throughout the State was \$ 2·66, or, including the amount of board and fuel contributed, \$ 2·80, for each child between four and sixteen.

There are several very encouraging facts, shown by the aggregate of these returns, compared with those of the preceding year. Three additional towns have sent returns, with an additional population of less than seven hundred. The number of male teachers has diminished from 2,411 to 2,378, that is, by 33 ; while the number of female teachers has increased by 103, viz. from 3,825 to 3,928. The average wages, paid per month, to males have risen from \$ 31·90 to \$ 33·08, viz. \$ 1·19 per month. Those of female teachers have risen from \$ 12·32 to \$ 12·75, viz. \$ 0·43 per month ; and when

it is considered, that, during that time, the wages in Boston and most of the larger towns have continued nearly the same, and that two of the counties have made no change, a very favorable one is indicated in the smaller towns elsewhere.

The average of the time of keeping schools has increased from seven months and four days to seven months and ten days, a full week for each school in the State.

The amount raised by taxes, &c., has increased from \$447,809 to \$477,221 ; and the amount contributed, from \$31,934 to \$37,269 ; while the aggregate paid for the tuition of private schools and academies has diminished nearly in an equal rate, from \$270,462 to \$241,114.

The whole amount raised or contributed for the support of public schools has increased from \$479,744 to \$514,490.

The whole amount paid for schools, public and private, has increased from \$817,217.24 to \$828,334.66.

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- ART. VIII. — 1. *Address, delivered before the Charitable Irish Society, in Boston, March 17th, 1837.* By JAMES BOYD, President of the Society. Boston. 1837.
2. *Scenery and Antiquities of Ireland, illustrated. The Literary Department* by N. P. WILLIS, Esq. Numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4. London. 1840.
3. *The Token, and Atlantic Souvenir, for 1840.* Edited by S. G. GOODRICH. Boston.
4. *The Pilot Newspaper ; for the Years 1838, 1839, and 1840.* Boston.
5. *The New York Freeman's Journal.* Scattered Numbers. 1840.
6. *The Spirit of Seventy-Six ;* New York Newspaper. Number 1. November, 1840.
7. *The Native American ;* New Orleans Newspaper. Scattered Numbers.

THE subject which we have here undertaken to discuss, is one of serious importance, and it is also, in common parlance, one of great delicacy ; that is to say, one which involves many of the conflicting tastes, passions, and prejudices